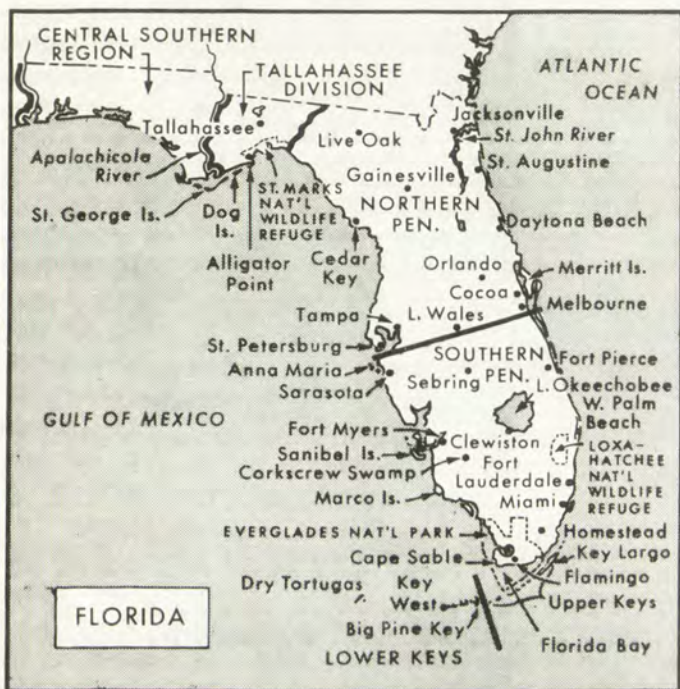


abbreviations: U.N.C.W., University of North Carolina at Wilmington; N.C.S.M., North Carolina State Museum; C.H.B.C. Cape Henry Bird Club; \* specimen.—**ROBERT P. TEULINGS**, Route 2, Box 154, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514.

## FLORIDA REGION / Henry M. Stevenson

**WEATHER AND DROUGHT**—The most important aspect of the weather, insofar as birds are concerned, is the severe drought in South Florida, considered the worst since 1962-63 (by some, "the worst in history"). Its cause was partly natural, as shown by an inspection of weather records in the s. half of the Peninsula. Tampa had rainfall deficiencies in 8 of the last 10 months,



with a net accumulated deficiency of about 19 inches; Fort Myers and Miami showed deficiencies in all 10 months, with accumulated shortages of about 17 and 22 inches, respectively. Comparable data were not available for the weather station in the Everglades Nat'l Park (Royal Palm), but the deficiency for the last 3 months there was about 3½ inches (normal rainfall: 5½ inches). As a general rule, it may be said that man's role is too often that of aggravating the natural extremes, as "flood control" usually consists of releasing water for the 'glades when there is already too much and withholding it when there is too little, so that man's interests farther north may best be served. By the end of the period, the muck (usually under inches of water) was so dry that fires were widespread and a smoke pall hung over South Florida. Unfortunately, no appreciable amounts of rainfall could be expected until late May—much too late to benefit the nesting of most large water

birds this season. In this part of the state temperatures were close to normal after a cold November, but North Florida averaged below. The latter fact may have had a bearing on decreases among some small insectivorous birds listed below.

**DEPARTURES FROM NORMAL ABUNDANCE**—Quantitative studies begun in the Tallahassee area in 1946 have provided a long-term basis for comparisons of various species with their "normal" (average) abundance. The methods employed have been described in previous issues of this periodical and need not be repeated here. Suffice it to say that, when monthly summaries of abundance were compared in each of the two subdivisions (Leon County and coastal counties), most of the same species varied in the same direction in the winter of 1970-71 as in other recent winters. Five of these were low in each subdivision every month from November through March: Black Vulture, Bald Eagle, Mourning Dove, Water Pipit, and Palm Warbler. Other species considered significantly low were: Great Blue Heron, Canada Goose, Mallard, Pintail, Am. Widgeon, Shoveler, scaups (aggregate), Turkey Vulture, Red-shouldered Hawk, E. Phoebe, Tree Swallow, Com. Crow, Hermit Thrush, E. Bluebird, Blue-gray Gnatcatcher, Ruby-crowned Kinglet, Cedar Waxwing, Red-winged Blackbird, Am. Goldfinch, Chipping Sparrow, and Field Sparrow. (Species normally too uncommon to provide a basis for comparison in either subdivision were omitted.) Those species averaging significantly above their norms included the Red-tailed Hawk, Am. Coot, Dunlin (the 2 latter always abundant), Carolina Wren, Mockingbird, Brown Thrasher, Cardinal, Slate-colored Junco, and Song Sparrow. When these results are compared with the impressions of other observers, it is surprising how little agreement there is. John Edscorn, for example, referred to only 3 species-groups in my first 2 lists as comparatively scarce (scaups, E. Bluebird, and Am. Goldfinch). His own list, however, added Ring-necked Duck, Marsh Hawk, Sparrow Hawk, Am. Coot, Com. Snipe, and Black-and-white Warbler. Perhaps the chief reason for the discrepancies is the fact that Edscorn's impressions were based more on conditions in central Florida than in the Tallahassee area, a fact that might indicate, for migratory species, a shift in the center of density this winter. Comments on variations in a few other species are mentioned later in this report.

**MIGRATION**—Again this year it was evident that migration reports are greatly influenced by the coincidence of cold fronts and week-ends. A well-timed front in late March produced several species seldom or never before found in the Tallahassee Division in March when 2 observers (HS, NW) spent the 27th on St. George I. (Franklin Co.). This date and Mar. 28 also appear frequently with records in other parts of

the state. One can only wonder how good the front would have looked had these dates fallen, say, on Monday and Tuesday rather than on Saturday and Sunday.

**LOONS AND GREBES**—Again this winter a few Com. Loons wintered inland around Tallahassee (chiefly L. Jackson, HS) and Lakeland (JE). Although large numbers survived the winter in North Florida, about 115 of this species and the Red-throated Loon were found dead during one week of mid-February on the beaches of Duval and Nassau Cos. (SG, et al.). Inland populations of Horned Grebes were also higher than usual around Tallahassee and Lakeland, with an estimate of 250 near Lakeland on Dec. 29 (JE). An **Eared Grebe** was seen at Pass-a-grille (Pinellas Co.) from January to March (JB, et al.).

**PELECANIFORMS**—A flock of 50 White Pelicans a few miles inland from Panacea on Feb. 8 (Frank Zontek), in an area where the species is generally rare in winter, is the earliest evidence of migration in the Tallahassee Division. Impressions of the relative abundance of Gannets were somewhat contradictory, probably owing to the fact that the species often passes through an area too quickly to be detected. Fort Pierce (HK) and the Tallahassee area had very few, but many were seen around the Upper Keys (SS), including a count of 44 flying NE on Feb. 28 (TCM). A Brown Booby was seen off Key Largo on Dec. 12 (C. E. Knoder). The Tallahassee Division, with only one prior record, experienced a mild invasion of **Great Cormorants**; in addition to those mentioned in the fall report and the Panacea CBC, single birds were seen at St. George I., Feb. 6, and L. Talquin (Leon Co.), Feb. 18 (HS). All were immatures with whitish bellies.

**WADERS**—Single Great White Herons (or same bird each time?) wandered as far n. as Englewood, Jan. 16 & 29, and Siesta Key, Mar. 31 (OL, ET, et al.). A Lakeland observer (JE, Route 3, Box 400) has commented several times about the swimming of Great Blue Herons in the pursuit of prey and would like to hear from anyone else who has observed the phenomenon. Rare in recent winters in the Tallahassee Division, a Cattle Egret near Panacea on Mar. 2 (CG) probably represented a very early arrival. The same statement probably applies to a Least Bittern seen near St. Marks Light on Mar. 4 (CG), but the secretive habits of this species help to account for the scarcity of winter records. W. W. Chapman estimated 500-1000 Wood Ibis and "at least 50 nests" near Bartow on April 3, but many pairs that had begun nesting in the Everglades Nat'l Park deserted their nests by early April, except for approx. 75 pairs on Cuthbert I. still attempting to raise young in early May. The 1965 population of 5200 there has now dropped to about 2500 or fewer (JO). A few Glossy Ibis continue to winter at their northw. limits on the St. Marks N. W. R. In the same area White Ibis remained in good numbers all winter, and

some had begun their westward migration by Jan. 2 (HS, et al.), as they did even earlier in another dry winter (1961-62).

**GEESE AND DUCKS**—The number of Brant wintering in Florida was probably the highest in many years—up to 5 in the Cocoa-Titusville area, remaining to Mar. 28 (AC, et al.), and up to 10 in the Flamingo area (JO, et al.). Fulvous Tree Ducks continued to visit s.e. Florida in good numbers, with more than 200 estimated on the Loxahatchee N. W. R., Mar. 21 (TCM), and 40 on Conservation Area 3A, Dec. 1 (PS); one strayed s. to Sugarloaf Key, Mar. 25 & 26 (Lois Kitching, FH, et al.). Records of the rare **Bahama Duck** came from West Palm Beach, Dec. 29–Jan. 5 (Robert Smart, Jas. Williams, et al.), and Flamingo, Mar. 29-31 (Joe Hudick, JO, et al.). The Eur. Widgeon again was seen by many observers at Wakulla Springs, some again raising the question of whether it is a hybrid. I find that it agrees well with the specimen in the F.S.U. collection and with some paintings, but not so well with other paintings. If intermediate, I believe it is closer to *penelope*. Rare visitors to Key West included a Green-winged Teal, Jan. 26, and 3 Shovelers, Jan. 4 to end of period (FH). Edscorn considered the Redhead more common than usual, documenting the point with a count of 703 at Mullet Key (Pinellas Co.) on Feb. 18. Also outstanding were estimates of 200 Canvasbacks in McKay Bay (Tampa) on Jan. 30 (JE & CO) and a peak of 1000 Wood Ducks on the Woodruff N.W.R. (near Deland; RL). Oldsquaws were recorded as follows: St. Marks Light, Jan. 23 (JE, et al.); Alligator Point (Franklin Co.), Jan. 24 (JE, et al.); Bradenton, Jan. 6-13 (Leslie Ryder, et al.); Wakulla Springs, Mar. 14 (Benton Basham; latest for Tallahassee Division). A **Com. Eider** remained at Ft. George Inlet (Duval Co.) from late November to Feb. 4 (Mrs. J. Markgraf & many others). The numbers of scoters in the Tallahassee Division were down somewhat from their peak of 1969-70; a White-winged Scoter at Longboat Key (Sarasota Co.) on Mar. 28 (W. P. Johnson) was rare and very late. The large number of Ruddy Ducks reported for L. Jackson (Leon Co.) in fall continued into December, with 10,000 on the 20th (HS), but dropped to a few hundred in subsequent months. A male **Masked Duck** was studied by many observers and photographed on the Loxahatchee N. W. R., Feb. 13–Mar. 2 (first seen by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Griffin, Carl Griffin, and Wally George).

**HAWKS, EAGLES, AND FALCONS**—Large numbers of Swainson's Hawks wintered s. of Miami (JO), including a high count of 30 in one flock on Feb. 20 (Eric Tabb, WBR). One at "Long Point Park", Feb. 11 (AE), was presumably in the Northern Peninsula where rarely recorded. A light-phase **Rough-legged Hawk** was identified near Tallahassee, Feb. 8 (JS). A pair of Bald Eagles was seen carrying nesting material on the

very late date of Mar. 23 (CG). Aside from the C B Cs, Peregrine Falcons were recorded at only 2 localities.

**QUAIL, LIMPKINS, AND RAILS**—The value of certain private lands as game preserves was illustrated by a count of about 160 Bobwhites in less than an hour on a plantation NE of Tallahassee, Jan. 14 (HS). More than 100 Limpkins were recorded in marshes of the upper St. Johns R. on Dec. 7 (HK, PS), and single individuals reached islands off Vero Beach (D.O.R., Feb. 7, HK) and in the Lower Keys (Key West, Mar. 24, FH). The species is said to "breed all winter" in the Shark R. Valley (Erwin Winte), and 2 broods of half-grown young were seen near the Tamiami Trail on Feb. 10 (Richard Klukas). Such "winter" breeding takes place only in years of abundant apple snail production and adequate water in the Everglades, which was the case prior to the drought. Another Sora hit the WCTV tower as early as Feb. 27 (Wilson Baker), and the rare Yellow Rail was seen on the Loxahatchee N. W. R. on Feb. 18 (PS).

**SHOREBIRDS**—A late Am. Golden Plover was encountered in s. Dade Co. on Dec. 6 (CO). Three Wilson's Plovers and about 80 Knots near St. James (Franklin Co.) on Mar. 1 provided evidence of an early migration of each (HS, et al.). A Pectoral Sandpiper at Zellwood on Dec. 13 (JE & Chas. Saffell) was the latest for Florida unless wintering. Stilt Sandpipers wintered from Lakeland and Tampa s. (JE), and the Bar-tailed Godwit remained near Cocoa until Mar. 28 (fide AC). Following the increase of Am. Avosets wintering in South Florida, population build-ups were noted at McKay Bay (to 220 on Feb. 4, GW & FL) and on Merritt I. (41 on Mar. 28, AC & HC). Rarely wintering in the Tallahassee Division, 1 was seen near Carrabelle as late as Dec. 5 (HS).

**GULLS, TERNS, AND SKIMMERS**—As it is rare on the Gulf Coast, a Great Black-backed Gull near St. Petersburg in December (GW) and January (JE) is noteworthy. Perhaps the prize of the period, however, was a **Lesser Black-backed Gull** in Old Tampa Bay, Feb. 18-22; collecting it on the last date removed the species from Florida's Hypothetical List (GW, FL, et al.; \*U.S.F.). Black-legged Kittiwakes were seen at Port Canaveral, Dec. 6-10 (AC, et al.), and photographed at Jacksonville Beach on Mar. 10 (Jay Clark). As usual, the Least Tern was early in the Cocoa area, with 1 at Port Canaveral on Mar. 21 (HC & J. M. Cadbury). An estimate of 250 Black Skimmers on the Loxahatchee N. W. R. on March 12 (PS & Henry Armistead) was high for an inland locality.

**PIGEONS, DOVES, AND CUCKOOS**—The presence of "many" White-crowned Pigeons at Islamorada on Feb. 28 (JE, VM, PF), along with an extralimital record at Homestead, Feb. 24 (Geo. E. Allen), were most likely wintering birds rather

than early migrants. The species wintered in considerable numbers in the Upper Keys. Inca Doves are holding their own in a restricted section of Key West (FH), and 2 White-winged Doves were seen at Sharpes (Brevard Co.), Mar. 24 (Robert Barker). A partly melanistic Mourning Dove came to a Tallahassee feeder on Jan. 30 (FS). Winter records of Mangrove Cuckoos came from 3 localities in the Everglades Nat'l Park, and one found dead on Feb. 17 provided a specimen to support winter occurrence (\*E.N.P.).

**OWLS AND NIGHTJARS**—John Edscorn pointed out that the Burrowing Owl is much more migratory than is generally realized, most of them disappearing from their breeding grounds in fall. Short-eared Owls were reported from Port Canaveral, Dec. 13 ff. (JE, et al.); the Sunshine Skyway (near St. Petersburg), 2 found dead on Dec. 22 & Jan. 5 (FL); and near St. James, Jan. 16 (HS & NW). A Chuck-will's-widow near St. Marks Light on Mar. 6 (CG), unless it had wintered, is the earliest known in the Tallahassee Division. Com. Nighthawks were recorded at Miami, Dec. 8 (JO), and near Homestead, Dec. 22 & 23 (Phil Kahl).

**SWIFTS, HUMMINGBIRDS, AND WOODPECKERS**—Five early Chimney Swifts appeared at Rockledge on Mar. 16 (AC), and a Ruby-throated Hummingbird wintered as far n. as Winter Haven (PF). A Lakeland observer (JE), commenting on the disappearance of nesting Red-headed Woodpeckers there in fall, along with their scarcity farther south in winter, postulates that they may migrate northward in fall! Two Red-cockaded Woodpeckers near West Palm Beach on Jan. 22 (PS) were probably the most southeasterly record since 1960.

**FLYCATCHERS AND SWALLOWS**—South Florida had 3 records of the rare **Wied's Crested Flycatcher**: 1 seen well but not heard, Snake Bight Road, Feb. 13 (TCM); 1 mist-netted and photographed near Homestead, Mar. 10 (EF); and 1 seen and heard at Flamingo, Mar. 20 (Robert Russell). Three Early Barn Swallows appeared on Alligator Point, Mar. 20 (JS & JG); at Daytona Beach, Mar. 23 (HO); and at Gainesville, Mar. 24 (Jas. Dinsmore).

**JAYS THROUGH VIREOS**—After an unusual invasion of the Florida Keys, the last Blue Jay was seen on Plantation Key on Mar. 26 (SS). The Red-breasted Nuthatch was apparently scarce in the Tallahassee Division (and unreported elsewhere), but observers did not visit its stronghold of Dog I. this winter. Brown Creepers were also scarce in this area, but their numbers were up near Jacksonville (SG), and one ranged s. to Merritt I. Dec. 27-29 (JJ). At Bushnell an early Red-eyed Vireo was recorded on Mar. 13 (JE).

**WARBLERS**—A Prothonotary Warbler on Merritt I., Mar. 17 (AE), tied the earliest date for the Northern Peninsula, and another was seen at Daytona Beach the next day (HO & H. W.

Dearborn). Three Worm-eating Warblers and a Tennessee Warbler were early on St. George I. on Mar. 27 (HS), the latter the earliest for the Tallahassee Division; 2 Tennessees were seen on Mullet Key the next day (PF). Rarely wintering, a Nashville Warbler was seen well near Homestead on Feb. 21 (TCM); a remarkably early one on St. George I., Mar. 11 (HS), was the first spring record for the Tallahassee Division (\*F.S.U.), and another was early at Rockledge on Mar. 22 (AC). Also record-breaking was the beginning of the Parula Warbler's migration at Daytona Beach on Feb. 11 (GC), and a Yellow Warbler at Daytona Beach on Dec. 7 was remarkable whether very late or wintering (GC & Geo. Murray). Two Ovenbirds on St. George I. on Mar. 27 (HS & NW) were the earliest of record for the Tallahassee Division, as was a N. Waterthrush there on Mar. 6 (HS; \*F.S.U.). Even earlier, though not record-breaking, was a La. Waterthrush on the upper St. Marks R. (Wakulla Co.) on Feb. 17 (Tom Morrill). Other wintering rarities included Yellow-breasted Chats at Lakeland (G. J. Horel) and Fort Pierce ("HV") and a Wilson's Warbler at St. Petersburg, Dec. 20 (GW).

**ORIOLES, BLACKBIRDS, GROSBEAKS, AND BUNTINGS**—A Bullock's Oriole wintered at a Tallahassee feeder (FS), and others were sighted near Flamingo on Jan. 3 (JO) and Mar. 21-28 (CO, et al.). Two Brewer's Blackbirds at Islamorada on Feb. 21 (GC) were most unusual for the Keys. Winter records of Blue Grosbeaks came from St. Augustine (Dec. 23-26, GC), Bartow, Jan. 2, PF, JB, et al.), and Fort Pierce (Feb., Harold Wilson; March 9, 2 by Mrs. Hubert Graves). One on Mullet Key, Mar. 27 (JE), was the earliest spring arrival for the Northern Peninsula. The Tallahassee Division, with only one previous March record of the Indigo Bunting, had a rash of them this year: 1 at Ruth Breen's feeder on Mar. 16 was followed by a second one on the 27th; on the latter date, however, others appeared at Tallahassee feeders, and 3 were counted on St. George I. (HS & NW); finally, 2 were seen at each of 2 localities on the St. Marks N. W. R. on March 29 & 31 (CG). Another Indigo Bunting at Mullet Key on the 27th (JE) was also relatively early. Also record-breaking in the Mar. 27 flight on St. George I. was a Painted Bunting (HS & NW), and one wintered as far n. as DeLand (RL). Single Dickcissels were found in March at Winter Haven (PF) and on Mar. 20 at Panacea (JS & JG); these March appearances over the years are puzzling in view of the species' normally late spring migration.

**FINCHES AND SPARROWS**—By all accounts, the flight of northern finches (Carduelinae) was much reduced, with Purple Finches not reaching Tallahassee until mid-January. Edscorn considered the Rufous-sided Towhee "shockingly scarce" in central and s. Florida. Southerly records of Henslow's Sparrows came from near West Palm

Beach, 2 on Feb. 21 (HL, CO, JE, et al.), and s. Martin Co., 2 on Dec. 5 (HL, PS, et al.); and of the Sharp-tailed Sparrow near West Palm Beach, Dec. 29-Jan. 24 (CO, HL, PS, et al.). A Lark Sparrow wintered at Melbourne Beach (JE, et al.), and there were several records of the White-crowned Sparrow: Monticello (winter; Wm. Hearn), near Homestead (2 on Dec. 6, CO), Lakeland (Dec. 26, JE & VM), and Pass-a-grille (2 in Jan. & Feb., VM & Polly Sherman). An unusual concentration of Fox Sparrows near Tallahassee peaked at about 20 individuals (Veronica Panteleidis), and single birds were reported at nearby locations (JS, Robert Godfrey). The rare Lincoln's Sparrow was found near the Withlacoochee River (Sumter Co.) on Mar. 12 (JE).

**EXOTICS**—Canary-winged Parakeets (*Brotogeris versicolurus*) continued to increase and spread; 2 were seen near the Tamiami Trail 35 miles W of Miami, Mar. 13 (CO), and about 20 in the e. part of the Everglades Nat'l Park, Mar. 27 (TCM). More and more, there is need of a firm policy against introductions. The matter is just as simple as the question of whether any one or a few individuals should be permitted to change our natural environment without the consent of the general populace.

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## ONTARIO—WESTERN NEW YORK REGION

/ Clive E. Goodwin and Richard C. Rosche

### ONTARIO

Most Ontario residents would agree that the less said about the winter of 1970-71 the better. Record breaking cold and snow fall was recorded across the Province, and heavy ice and deep snowdrifts curtailed bird watching activities. In spite of these miserable conditions the season produced a good assortment of species, and the heavy snow may have tended to concentrate birds at feeders, allowing them to be seen.